

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

Replace the paragraph on page 8, between lines 19-28 of the specification with the following:

A portion 15 of the surface of the discharge vessel 3 facing the discharge space is provided with a protective layer 16 comprising yttrium oxide or aluminum oxide and a borate and/or a phosphate of an alkaline earth metal and/or of scandium, yttrium, or a further rare earth metal. The protective layer 16 is provided for reducing the absorption of mercury by the glass of the discharge vessel 3. An advantage of using a protective layer comprising a borate and/or a phosphate of scandium, yttrium, lanthanum, cerium, and/or gadolinium is that the mercury consumption of low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamps provided with such a protective layer is considerably lower than with protective layers in the known low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamps. Preferably, the stem 10 in the discharge vessel is also provided with a protective layer 28.